THE · DRIFT TOWARD RELIGION

ALBERT W. PALMER

J. P. Landis.

Dayton.

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by

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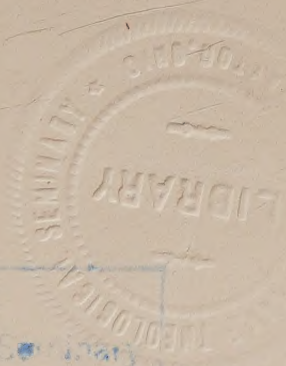

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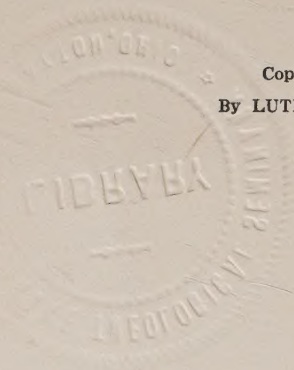

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To my mother on her seventieth birthday
and to my father in memory of evenings
when he read aloud many good books
to his small boy. . . . . .

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PREFACE

President Wilson, in an address at the Greek Theater at the University of California, once said that the trouble with most of us is that when we know enough to write one chapter we insist on writing a book—filling in the other chapters with other men's opinions!

The author of this book disclaims enough originality for even one chapter! The whole book is filled with unconscious plagiarism, with other men's ideas the sources of which have been forgotten, and probably the only original thing about it is the order in which the ideas are marshalled. It simply represents the effort of a young minister to justify religion to the thoughtful people of a modern western city. It is not an argument so much as it is a confession of faith—albeit a confession of faith not fantastic nor irrational, but made after a university education and in the full and glad acceptance of the modern point of view.

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CHAPTER I

THE DRIFT TOWARD RELIGION

CHAPTER I

THE DRIFT TOWARD RELIGION

LESS than twenty years ago Henry Van Dyke gave a course of lectures at Yale on "The Gospel for An Age of Doubt." Those lectures in printed form were put into my hands as an undergraduate at The University of California. They contained this striking characterization of the age: "The questioning spirit of today is severe but not bitter, restless but not frivolous; it takes itself very seriously and applies its methods of criticism, of analysis, of dissolution, with a sad courtesy of demeanor, to the deepest and most vital truths of religion, the being of God, the reality of the soul, the possibility of a future life. Its coat-of-arms is an interrogation point rampant, above three bishops dormant, and its motto is *Query?*"

A little later, in my senior year, I came across a poem which seemed to express almost perfectly the spiritual mood in which I lived. It was Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach":

"Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanched sand,
Listen! you hear the grating roar

Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

"Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery: we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

"The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

"Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night."

The sentence by Van Dyke and the poem by Matthew Arnold sum up the impression of religion which largely colored my undergraduate days. Religion was obsolescent, something to be apologized for—beautiful in a way but destined to early death.

But now the tide has turned; the drift is toward religion.

It is so in my own case—personal experience during the last ten years has deepened and strengthened my own religious attitude toward life. As I look back at my college days I realize that it was a very small cargo of religious faith with which I emerged on Commencement Day. I had thrown overboard the miracles, eternal punishment, the scheme of salvation, the atonement, and the infallibility of the Bible. I wrote to my friend the minister of the church at home: "You suggest my going into the ministry! Why, I am not even sure I am a Christian! I don't believe in the Bible or the miracles or the Virgin Birth or much of anything else."

He wrote back to me these wise words of counsel: "But you do believe in the Golden Rule, the Lord's Prayer and the Sermon on the Mount. Then make these your religion. Try to live up to this much of Christianity and put the other questions up on a high shelf and wait. Maybe some day you will be able to take them down and see them in a new light. In the mean time you will have enough to do in living up to what you *can* accept."

It was admirable advice and it kept me from reacting utterly against religion and the Church. Then in my senior year came a never-to-be-forgotten course in Tennyson and Browning out of which I came feeling, "Well, if this

sort of interpretation of life isn't true, it ought to be!" Then came William James' essay, "The Will to Believe." With this religious equipment I graduated from the university.

In the thirteen years since then my religious outlook has grown. Year by year faith has deepened and sweetened. One by one I have taken down some things from the high shelf, reinterpreted them in the light of a larger experience in life and added them to my possessions. There are still some things up there on the shelf—but I am not worrying about them any more. They help to make the future seem interesting!

I am convinced that this experience is no merely personal one—it is also in part the experience of the age. The drift toward religion is on in many departments of life. Who would have been rash enough to have prophesied twenty years ago, for example, that in materialistic Chicago a great political party would be born which would spontaneously choose as its marching song "Onward, Christian Soldiers"? Who could then have foreseen the subsequent development of Christian Science and the whole New Thought Movement in answer to spiritual hunger? For, though one cannot be blind to the possibility of tragedy in Christian Science and the occasional foolishness in New Thought, an impartial observer must recognize that these forms of religious expression have made progress not by the

vagaries which attach to them like barnacles but by the motive power of their spiritual idealism.

In academic and scientific circles we find the drift toward religion in the philosophies of Rudolph Eucken and Henri Bergson and in the utterances of Sir Oliver Lodge, while in the business and commercial world it is evidenced in the millions of dollars poured out to erect buildings for The Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations and in the growing respect for foreign missionaries. Time was when foreign missionary enterprise was a mere foolish sentimentality to be tolerated but despised, but in these new days even the proverbial "man in the street" has awakened to the fact that, in view of recent history in China and Turkey and Albania, the missionary is in reality a statesman and a pioneer of all that is best and noblest in civilization.

This religious quickening is apparent in the fiction of today. I do not have time to read many novels, but recently I have carefully studied three works of fiction which are altogether inspiring in their religious significance. One was "The Fear of Living" by Henry Bordeaux. This is the story of a fine, courageous old woman, strengthened through suffering by her religious faith, over against a background of selfish pleasure-seeking people who are afraid of hardship—paralyzed, as it were, by "The Fear of Living." The second novel

was "The Way Home" by Basil King, the story of a man who deserted his ideals and started out to live in materialism and undisguised selfishness, only to find himself driven at last by the logic of life back to the ideals which he thought he had parted with forever. The third novel was "The Inside of the Cup," easily the most widely-discussed book of the year, a frank and enthusiastic setting forth of the newer thought of the day on various religious questions.

But even closer than the novel to the heart of any age is the drama, and the religious spirit of the modern drama is remarkable. Have you heard and comprehended that really great allegory of modern religious life, "The Servant in the House"? And do you realize that it has been from every point of view one of the most successful plays? Have you heard Forbes-Robertson in "The Passing of the Third Floor Back"? Did "The Blue Bird" bring you no message from the land of the ideal? Can you ever forget that great scene in "The Piper" where the Piper himself argues with the lonely man, the crucified figure of the wayside shrine, and at last surrenders his will to Christ's? From the revival of "Everyman" a few years ago to "The Wolf of Gubbio," published last December, the modern drama is overflowing with religion. How wonderfully it all contrasts with the hopelessness of the lines of "Dover Beach"!

Why? Why this drift toward religion? It is altogether possible that we cannot tell. Forces are at work which we cannot fully understand nor anticipate.

> "We cannot kindle, when we will
> The fires that in the heart reside;
> The spirit bloweth and is still,
> In mystery our souls abide."

But so far as we can lay hold on the causes of this religious reawakening it seems to me we must include these three:

(1) The emergence of the modern point of view in religious thought—what is sometimes called "the new theology." We suffered fifteen years ago because our religious traditions and our scientific instruction were hopelessly at war with one another. Religion was so universal in the life of the Middle Ages partly because then religion and science harmonized—went hand in hand. When religion and science seemed to disagree it was inevitable that many intelligent men should sadly but firmly consign religion to the realm of outgrown even though quaint and beautiful antiquities. We have all met men who advised us to "read the King James Version of the Bible simply for its beautiful English," at the same time implying that they had long since passed beyond getting out of it anything more vital than a pure English style.

But there are not lacking indications that

we are going to approximate once more the condition where scientific and religious thought are allies, as science and true religion must ever be. For the new theology is primarily a scientific theology, recording gladly all facts attained by scientific investigation. What this modern religious thought is—how it finds reinforcement in modern science, how it demands no false surrenders from men and women trained in the scientific spirit—this book seeks to set forth.

To men and women who dread and fear the new theology may I offer the parable of the aqueduct and the pipe line? A city in Italy long ago obtained its water, pure and clear, from the mountains far away across the plain by conveying it in a long aqueduct carried high above the surrounding country, part of the way on lofty arches. But as the centuries passed these arches fell into decay—some of them were faultily constructed and earthquakes shook them down—and so the aqueduct was broken in places and water no longer flowed through it to the city. Then in our own day came men with modern equipment, who laid a pipe line from the city to the mountain springs. The pipe line followed the same general direction as the old aqueduct and it drew its water from the same source, and when at length it was completed the water poured through it into the city and was distributed, clear and sparkling, in a hundred fountains.

For the great majority of college-trained

men and women the traditional theology is a broken aqueduct, interesting, picturesque, not altogether unloved, but broken at certain vital points and therefore no longer capable of bringing water into the modern world to quench its spiritual thirst. If we had to choose between the traditional theology of our childhood and agnosticism, we should sadly but of necessity become agnostics. But no such sad necessity is upon us. God fulfills himself in various ways and the new theology is the inevitable accompaniment of the new science and the new learning. By it men are simply seeking along more modern lines to tap the great mountain reservoirs of spiritual truth and bring to the thirsty fountains of our spiritual city the same water of eternal life and inspiration which in other days flowed in the aqueduct.

(2) A second force setting in motion this drift toward religion is undoubtedly the modern emphasis upon the social message of Christianity. Books like Peabody's "Social Message of Jesus" and Rauschenbusch's "Christianity and the Social Crisis," to mention only two where many could be cited, are in part results and in part causes of this awakening of social religion.

This social emphasis has given to religion what it sorely needed—a larger and more adequate conception of salvation. The old salvation which we were told about in Sunday school and to which the revivalists invited us was a

narrow and selfish thing. But here comes the great vision of social salvation—nothing petty or selfish about it—calling for all of a man's reserves of power and consecration to bring it even partially to pass in the community of which he is a citizen. The man who goes forth to meet the gigantic social problems of city life —or of country life either, for that matter— soon comes to realize his need of every possible reinforcement both for the cause he would advance and for his own personal renewal. Hence the rediscovery of religion as a social force and a secret of personal power and inspiration. It is no accident that by far the most popular and successful department of The Men and Religion Movement was that of social service, that Socialism is becoming distinctly more religious, that such a magazine as "The Survey" is edited by religious people in a spirit sympathetic toward the church and that the Y. M. C. A. was chosen by the government to care for its welfare work for employees in the Canal Zone. The very size and menace of certain social problems, the high-minded courageous service they require, the challenge they present to idealism and to faith, all combine to drive men and women who are socially minded back to some vital religious life. To set forth what such a socially-sensitive and not merely individualistic religion might be is one of the objects of this book.

(3) The third and deepest cause of this mod-

ern drift toward religion is the unquenchable nature of the religious instinct. The philosophy of Bergson has given us a new respect for instincts: they have cosmic significance; they reveal the presence of mighty forces. You may lose yourself for a while in the solution of physical problems—in digging deep and building high—you may even lose yourself in the material luxuries which come as a reward for the solving of such physical problems, but ultimately you will come back again to the haunting questions of religion.

"When the mind is mapped as streets are—row on row;
When the heart is tamed from Love's unreasoning throe;
When the poet's winged fancy
Is an outgrown necromancy;
When the rain of inspiration turns to snow:
What then?

"When all doubts and fears alike are backward cast;
When the dream of world-wide Brotherhood is past;
When the prophet's radiant vision
Is too futile for derision;
When the soul is but a formula at last:
What then?

"When the fierce machine has conquered flesh and blood;
When the labor-power is belt and wheel and rod;
When the unfit nations wonder
At the gold we stagger under;
When the world is but an economic clod:
What then?"

It is a part of the object of this book to justify this religious instinct and to make it easier

for thoughtful men and women to respond to it and guide it instead of striving vainly to quench or disown it.

Since the drift toward religion is on—what then? How shall we respond to this tendency of our age?

Well, first of all, let us rejoice in it. Let us cease to be apologetic for religion or the Church. The "go-to-church Sunday" which has recently become so popular is an indication of a better attitude on the part of the general public. Religion is a part of life—historically and psychologically. Let that man be ashamed and apologetic who does not share in this great human experience!

In the second place, let us be tolerant. It would be a sad thing if the drift toward religion meant any drift back into the *odium theologicum,* into the denominational warfare and theological strife which have disgraced the past. Let us give to every man the utmost freedom of thought and expression in his religious life. After all, the real gulf is not between those who hold one religious belief and those who defend another—between those who believe in the Virgin Birth and those who do not, between those who hold to the Apostolic Succession and those who do not. Such differences as these are mere surface grooves when compared to the real gulf which exists between all those who seek to live the life of the spirit and those who regard life with a brutal selfish-

ness and a cynical disregard for all ideals. Some one has said of foreign missions: "It is hard to discuss forms of baptism in the presence of a man engaged in worshipping a cow." Let us not waste energy in unbrotherly controversy in the face of the cynical materialism which is a foe to all religion and all ideals.

Finally, let us be open-minded in this glad new day of religious quickening. It is altogether probable that new light is already breaking across the hills. Let us be ready to receive it. From Socialism, from Christian Science, from psychology, from modern thinkers like Tolstoy, Ibsen and Maeterlinck, from the feminist movement, from the life of Japan and the thought of India—from all the word of God in all places of his creation who shall say what new light may not break forth for us! Let us not be either credulous like children or hidebound like bigots, but let us be open-minded, ready to find profitable every writing inspired of God.

A new type of religious leader is about to stand forth. I like to call him the practical mystic.

Each age has produced that type of religious life best suited to its needs: the first century stands revealed in St. Paul the missionary, the centuries following contribute the martyrs to our wealth of Christian heroism, the Middle Ages make their gift in crusaders like St. Louis and in St. Francis, the little poor man

of Assisi, who sang to the sun and the birds and ministered to the poor and the outcast. Out of the awakening of the Renaissance come the great reformers—Wyclif, Huss, Savonarola and Luther—and out of the reconstruction period come the theologians from Calvin and Grotius to Jonathan Edwards and Horace Bushnell. The nineteenth century as its peculiar gift brings the evangelists—Finney, Moody, Drummond.

And now comes the new day in which we live—a day of social reconstruction and spiritual quickening. The typical Christian of this new day will be the practical mystic. He will be a mystic—sensitive to the spiritual values of life and its deepest music—but he will be also a man of practical power—facing the social problems of the age and contributing to their solution. He will be like Moses, who "endured as seeing Him that is invisible." The vision is essential to the endurance! Behind Moses the deliverer forever stands Moses the poet, finding the desert bush aflame with God, and behind Moses the lawgiver and civic organizer stands Moses the mystic, coming down from Sinai with the divine light shining on his face.

The meaning of the drift toward religion is that the practical men of our age are feeling out, oftentimes blindly, for the power of mysticism. The meaning of the new emphasis on social Christianity is that the mysticism of to-

day is ready to link itself to the great practical tasks of life. Men like Dr. Grenfell and Professor Rauschenbush, to go no farther, admirably illustrate what I mean by the term "practical mystic."

This book is written primarily to help practical people to be mystics also and to gain from religion, vision, comfort, and reserve power.

CHAPTER II

GOD

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GOD

"A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Fern'd grot—
The veriest school
Of Peace; and yet the fool
Contends that God is not—
Not God! in gardens! when the eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign;
'Tis very sure God walks in mine."

I CANNOT hope to persuade you of the existence of God if you have not already sometimes found him walking in the garden of your life. But if you have found him there, the following considerations may help to clarify your vision of him and make your faith more uniform and constant.

Doubtless most of us believe in God a great deal more than we realize. The trouble is that we do not carry our belief up into the higher levels; we stop short of the goal. We believe quite readily in the Power which controls and unifies physical forces—the God, if you please, of chemistry and physics—but we often fail to recognize the no less inevitable Power behind consciousness, behind artistic and moral

impulses—the God of personality! As a matter of fact, I believe we are on the verge of a great awakening to the presence of God. The old conception of God as an anthropomorphic being who made the world as a watchmaker might make a watch, and then sat outside of it seeing the wheels go round and breaking in upon the machinery only occasionally to work a miracle—to clean a pivot or adjust a spring—this conception of an absentee deity who can be conducted to the edge of the universe and politely bowed out has passed away for most modern men. With this passing there has also passed, in too many cases, any potent faith in any God at all.

But there are not lacking signs that this transition period during which we have been

> "Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
> The other powerless to be born,"

to use the sad, reluctant words of Matthew Arnold in "The Grande Chartreuse," has practically ended. The new era is already born, and humanity is about to rediscover God, to find him close at hand calling to its deepest nature, even as long ago in the garden Mary heard the voice that called her by her name. For the God of today is not some huge artificer who built the world from without; he is rather the great Soul of the Universe who is ever creating and recreating it from within. You do not demonstrate his existence by appeals to a

supernatural book coming down from antiquity, though that book may be part of the evidence, nor by a record of miracles worked long ago on the shores of other seas, though those miracles, too, may be very interesting bits of evidence. But you find this God of today here in the world around you. Your primary evidence is not centuries old; it is new every hour. The greatest miracles have never been written; they are here in the blossoming of the rose and the yet more marvellous blossoming of childhood and youth. Miracles? The world is full of them and every common bush is aflame with God! If you do not see and stand in awe at the miracles going on all around you, what you think about the miracles of the Bible is a comparatively insignificant detail.

Let us look out into the universe in which we live and see what we find. In the first place, wherever we go we find ourselves in the presence of stupendous energy and power. Even so-called dead matter proves to be very much alive, permeated by mighty forces which we call gravitation. If I let loose the pencil in my hand it promptly drops to the floor, demonstrating a marvellous invisible connection between it and the total mass of the earth.

This "infinite and eternal energy" in the presence of which we live is fortunately for us no lawless, undependable affair. It works along

certain definite lines and we can depend upon its habits. It seems to act in a rational way and as far as we can push our scientific investigations into it we bring back formulas and reports of rational procedure. Apparently this universe is made up not of mere happy-go-lucky, aimless energy, but of energy which operates along lines laid down by intelligence. How large the supply of this intelligence is we have no way of knowing, but it seems to be sufficient to provide endless material for all the scientific investigators of the world. No man can look out at the vast spectacle of ordered life as reported in astronomy and geology, in chemistry, botany and zoology, in the habits of the bees and the instincts of the animals, and not pause reverently in the presence not of mere wayward power and occasional gleams of rationality, but in the presence of a great, unifying Intelligent Energy. That Intelligent Energy is God! As a matter of fact we all believe in God thus far and base our daily lives upon the fact of such a wise, dependable and unifying power at the heart of the universe.

"There is no unbelief:
Whoever plants a seed beneath the sod
And waits to see it push away the clod—
He trusts in God."

But we have not exhausted all we know about the universe in which we live. The story of evolution claims our attention and suggests

a great purpose, a certain dramatic quality, in the creation. This marvellous Intelligent Energy seems to be going somewhere. Only think,

> "Out of this nothingness arose our thought!
> This blank abysmal nought
> Woke and brought forth that lighted city street;
> Those towers, that armored fleet!"

The religious implications of evolution are tremendous. Instead of making God unnecessary it simply means that we have discovered him at work! All our scientific investigation, which once seemed to put God farther and farther away, now turns out to have been really bringing him closer to us. We can hear the very ringing music of his craftsmanship and catch hints of the perfect craft and tricks of the tools' true play.

> "We seem to hear a heavenly friend
> And through thick veils to apprehend
> A labor working to an end."

But our knowledge of the Intelligent Energy, in the presence of which we are ever found and from which there is no escape, is not limited by what science has to tell us of natural law or of evolution. Man, too, is a part of the universe and we have a right to judge this Power whose activities are all about us by its highest as well as its lower manifestations. Wherever we find man we find a sense of right and wrong and an obligation to do right. Kant said that there

were two things which filled his soul with awe: the spectacle of the starry heavens above and the moral law within the heart of man. Men may not agree as to what is right and what is wrong, but the sense of moral obligation is universal. With the capacity for morality there develops an appreciation of beauty. The earliest specimens of human craftsmanship which we possess have ornamentation on them, and the last boatload of babies from the land of the unborn children will soon be gathering buttercups and daisies with joyous appreciation. With morality and beauty goes love, the third great human quality. It may have come to us as Drummond and John Fiske suggest—along the road of the lengthening period of infancy and the increasing and appealing helplessness of human childhood, so that only those races survived that learned to protect mothers and love and care for children. But, however it came, love is here as one of the great radiant facts of human life.

Now these human characteristics are not merely human characteristics. We have the right to project them back into that mighty Energy which thrills through the universe and of which man is the noblest and highest manifestation. Is God personal? Assuredly he cannot be less than personal, for he cannot be less than that which reveals his presence and manifests his character. An Intelligent Power, characterized by a progressive purpose and a

sense of morality, beauty and love comes pretty near to being a definition of personality!

But we must be careful not to limit God's personality by our own. We cannot measure the ocean in a tin dipper! God's personality must be all that ours is—and then vastly more. As Herbert Spencer once said, "It is not a question between a personal God and something less, but between a personal God and something more!" Properly interpreted, that is profoundly true.

After all, it is not difficult to see that God's personality must include all that personality means to us and then more, for we see gradations of personality every day in the world around us. Here is a tree: we played under it in childhood; we loved it with an instinctive revival of primitive nature worship; we can close our eyes today and see the red berries and smell the fragrance of that old tree—it has an individuality all its own. But here is a dog. In him personality has reached a higher level—we have much more in common with him than with the tree. Not long ago a friend and I climbed Mount St. Helena. The friendly collie at the toll house accompanied us with eager enthusiasm. The freshness of the morning and the joy of muscular exertion were common sources of delight to him and to us. At the summit we drank some water from the canteen. That action appealed to him, too, as he lolled out his long red tongue, panting fever-

ishly and appealing to us with his big brown eyes. I laid my hat on the rocks, made a dent in the top of it to hold some water and he drank with hearty appreciation. So far our personalities had traveled similar roads. But now we read the tablet on the mountain top telling how it had first been climbed by a Russian party from Fort Ross in 1841. The dog was not interested. We spread a map on the ground, and he did not even pause to wonder what the little black lines meant. We pointed to the great white cone of Shasta, clearly visible nearly two hundred miles away, but Shasta meant nothing to him. Our human personalities had passed out into regions where his dog life could never go.

Even so I believe God is personal, not merely in the limited way in which we are, but in depths of being and richness of apprehension of reality which are simply beyond the depths of our human understanding. May not the great value of the doctrine of the Trinity be just here—that it emphasizes the richness and depth and superhuman quality of the personality of God?

I like to think of our relationship to God as being not like the relation of a completed statue to the sculptor who has made it, but more intimate, like the relation of the leaves to the tree. No leaf thinks for a moment that it is the tree, but each leaf gathers sunshine for the tree and receives from all the rest of the tree

the vital forces which give it life. Or, better still, I like to think of our lives as being related to God somewhat as the great bay out yonder is related to the ocean beyond. The bay is not the ocean. It knows its shallows and its limitations. The bay is forever distinct. There is no possible confusion between San Francisco Bay, for example, and Puget Sound or San Diego Bay. Yet bay and ocean are vitally connected: the same water fills them both and twice in every twenty-four hours the bay sends its ebb tides far out to sea and again twice in every twenty-four hours the great flood tides from the ocean crowd in and fill the bay to every nook and cranny, lifting it to higher levels.

How such a conception of our relationship to God transforms our conception of prayer! Prayer becomes no mere formula of words cast into the air to find wings and arise to heaven. If you have grace to receive it, God does not hear prayer—he feels it! The yearnings of our souls reach directly into the life of God. The connection between our lives and his is as real and immediate as that between two wireless stations tuned to receive each other's messages. The directions in which we protect our lives, the ways we put forth our energies, the work we do, the ends we seek with a whole soul's tasking—these are our real prayers. If they agree with our spoken prayers, well and good. But if they disagree with the prayers we utter

with our lips in church on Sunday morning—why, then we must only grieve the heart of God.

But I must guard this. Some one will say: "Then you don't believe in verbal prayer!" Indeed I do! What makes a patriot? Singing "America" or contributing a clean, honest life and sharing in all civic work? And yet we believe true citizens will want to sing "America." What makes a good mother? The kissing and fondling of her baby or ceaseless, watchful care for its physical growth and moral development? And yet we believe no mother can help caressing her child. Here is an artist. Essentially he is made an artist by his perception of beauty. But because he is an artist he will try to interpret into color or poetry or music the sunset that thrills him with its beauty. So prayer in its deepest meaning is invisible and inaudible—a motion of the spirit—but prayer also demands expression in your own words, in the classic English of "The Book of Common Prayer," in the beautiful "Vailima Prayers" of Robert Louis Stevenson or in those virile, warm-hearted, contemporary "Prayers of the Social Awakening," by Walter Rauschenbusch.

CHAPTER III

THE BIBLE

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THE BIBLE

WE live in a world of things made new. We have a new medicine, transformed by the discovery of anesthetics and antiseptic surgery, of antitoxin for diphtheria and of the elimination of the mosquito-spread malaria and yellow fever. We live in a world of new building construction, reinforced concrete and steel frames replacing the old stone walls. Our day is the day of a new biology with its emphasis upon evolution as the master key to all sorts of problems; of the new psychology with its discovery of the powers of suggestion and mental health; and—let us hope—of a new penology, replacing with its reform and moral regeneration the crude vengeance meted out to criminals for hundreds of generations.

The great spirit of scientific investigation and mental alertness to which we owe this reinterpretation of so many departments of life has not neglected the Bible. More lives of Christ have been written in the last forty years than in all the Christian centuries before. Such books as Hastings' "Bible Dictionary," the "Encyclopædia Biblica," "The Dictionary of

Christ and the Gospels," the Schaff-Herzog "Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge," "The International Critical Commentary" and "The Expositor's Bible"—both in many volumes—and works like Schurer's "Jewish People in the Time of Christ," Kent's "Students' Old Testament," the volumes of "The International Theological Library," Moffat's "New Testament," together with innumerable single volumes, bear witness to the vast amount of scholarly study of the Bible in Germany, Great Britain and the United States.

The result is that we have a new and better Bible. Many ideas that prejudiced men against the Bible, that clouded its interpretation and dishonored the God revealed to us by Jesus have passed away forever.

What is the Bible? Well—first of all—whatever else it may be, it is a great literature—the sifted and chosen literature of the Hebrew people. It represents those books which had sufficient vitality to live down through the centuries. In some way they so ministered to the needs of humanity that men would not let them die.

The Bible is not a book. It comes nearer to being a library. If you were to take Green's "History of England," "Pilgrim's Progress," the "Idylls of the King," a hymn-book, the Constitution and the common law, Phillips Brooks' sermons, "Poor Richard's Almanac," the letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, "Richard Carvel," the life of Abraham Lincoln, Bacon's

"Essays," "Paradise Lost" and Shakespeare's plays and bind them all in one volume, you would have in English literature something that would be comparable in scope and variety to the Bible. Only you would have to print these books solidly—without sentence, paragraph or chapter divisions. You would have to print the poetry as prose and the plays without any indications of scenes or speakers. Then have this solid mass chopped up into chapters and verses—not very intelligently but often cutting right across the middle of a poem or interrupting the development of an idea. Then bind the book in limp black leather, put it on the center table where it can be easily dusted and educate people to believe that it is all Bible, all prose, all to be taken literally, all of equal authority as the infallible word of God—the drollery of one of Shakespeare's fools to be taken just as seriously as Lincoln's Gettysburg Address—and you have for English literature something equivalent in form, matter and meaning to what our Bibles are in relation to the literature of the Hebrews.

As a matter of fact we have in the Bible many different literary forms. The Books of Samuel and Kings and the Book of Acts represent history; the early chapters of Genesis represent early traditions not dissimilar in quality to the stories of King Arthur; bits of allegory are scattered through the Old and New Testament; the Book of Psalms is the hymn-

book of the Second Temple; Deuteronomy and Leviticus represent the common law; Amos, Isaiah and the other prophets present one of the world's greatest collections of sermons and orations; the Book of Proverbs represents the practical wisdom of the Hebrew race; Ecclesiastes sometimes parallels the Rubaiyat in pessimism; Esther and Daniel probably partake of the character of historical romances not dissimilar to "Richard Carvel"; we have a collection of letters in the Epistles of St. Paul, and an approach to dramatic literature in the Book of Job, while the four most precious biographies in the world are the Gospels.

Why do I emphasize the fact that the Bible is literature? First: Because an appreciation of this fact helps us really to understand the different books. We read poetry in one mood, history in another, drama in yet another, and the common law in quite another. When you approach the Bible it is worth while to ask yourself: "What form of literature am I reading?" When, for example, you read in your English history that on a certain day in 1066 William the Conqueror landed on the English coast you take the matter seriously and as a statement of prosaic fact, but what would you think of a man who, reading "Gareth and Lynette," came to these lines:

> "Seeing the city is built
> To music, therefore never built at all,
> And therefore built forever"

and said: "That's stuff and nonsense! Cities aren't built to music. They are built to blueprints, bond issues and the demands of commerce." You would simply say to him: "Why, you don't understand what you are reading. This is poetry and the city is a symbol of the ideal." Yet, we have in the past constantly done violence to our Bibles by failing to recognize the different types of literature they contain.

A prosaic race, quite failing to understand the poetic Oriental temperament, has exhausted its wits to explain how Joshua could have stopped the earth from revolving on its axis, utterly missing the poetry in which the incident is narrated. And yet, are we entirely lacking in poetry? Do we not sing in our national anthem:

> "Let mortal tongues awake,
> Let all that breathe partake,
> Let rocks their silence break,
> The sound prolong"?

Should we not be slightly amazed to wake up two thousand years from now to find people solemnly claiming that rocks in our day were possessed of human speech when in the lines in question we were only trying to make a poetical reference to the echo?

"This is the tragedy of the Book of Jonah," says George Adam Smith, "that a book which is made the means of one of the most sublime revelations of truth in the Old Testament

should be known to most only for its connection with the whale." Why? Because to most people it has never been revealed that the Book of Jonah is an allegory, that the important thing is not the story it tells, but the message it carries. If this were once clearly understood, the whale would cease to worry us, and we should give our attention to the great message of human brotherhood and to the brooding, tender love of God for the great heathen city of Nineveh with its 120,000 little children too small to know their right hand from their left "and also much cattle."

You have an entirely parallel situation in "Pilgrim's Progress." I remember noticing when a boy that in the pictures of Christian he had no armor on his back and I criticized his inadequate equipment to my father, who was reading the story to me. It was explained that this was symbolical of the fact that a Christian is safe only when facing his foes and not when running away from them. But what would you think of a man who would say: "I don't believe in that book they call 'Pilgrim's Progress'? I went to Europe last summer and saw hundreds of suits of armor. Every one of them went all the way around. I don't believe any man ever went out to fight in a suit of armor that didn't protect his back." You would simply laugh at him and say he had missed the point of the allegory. But if a man suggests that he has doubts as to whether or

not Jonah was really swallowed by a great fish, you hold a heresy trial to determine whether or not he is a Christian.

It is worth while also to emphasize the literary character of the Bible because it brings into the Bible so much of variety and therefore of interest. If you have sixty-six different friends, you value them because of their distinct individualities. You admire this man for courage, and that one for his dogged determination. You honor this woman for her fine serenity of spirit and that one for her capacity to forgive injury. This friend ministers to your life by his love of poetry and this other one by his irrepressible sense of humor. How terrible it would be to have sixty-six friends all alike—have them answer your questions in the same words and greet your story with the same identical smile! When we understand the literary nature of the Bible its sixty-six different books become so many different friends ministering to us, each with its own message and fitted to meet different moods and times.

To illustrate this let me outline to you something of the personality of the four Gospels. The first one to be written was Mark. Mark was Peter's secretary at Rome. After Peter had given his life in martyrdom at the *Circus Maximus* the litle group of Christian believers, fearful lest what he had said of the Lord should be lost, persuaded Mark to write down what

he remembered of Peter's teachings about Jesus' life. The result is the kind of book one would expect to come out of such circumstances. Behind it is Peter—impulsive, alert, a man of action. It is addressed to the Roman people, the road-builders, the law-makers of antiquity, people who demanded results, who were interested in action. Mark's Gospel, therefore, contains very little discourse material, but it tells a great deal about what Jesus actually did. In its descriptions of his activities it is the most circumstantial and vivid of the four. It is Peter's Gospel, written for the Romans and portraying Jesus as the Master of Men, the Doer of Mighty Deeds.

The second Gospel to be written was Matthew. Our present Matthew is a combination of almost all of the narrative material of Mark together with a mass of discourse material which probably originally circulated independently and was known as the *logia* of Matthew. This Gospel was written in Palestine by a Jew and for the Jews. Its great theme is the Kingdom of Heaven. It gives The Sermon on the Mount as the inaugural address of that Kingdom. It is constantly appealing to the Jewish scriptures: "Thus it is written through the prophet" is a constantly recurring formula. Its great purpose is to set forth to Jewish readers Jesus as a fulfillment of prophecy and as the Messianic King.

Luke's Gospel, while containing much mate-

rial in common with Mark and Matthew, has an independent character of its own. It is written in the best Greek of the four. It abounds in medical terms. Its author was probably a Greek physician, a companion of St. Paul. Its dominant quality is its humanitarianism. It dwells with especial tenderness on Jesus' kindness to children and women and all other neglected and outcast classes of the day. It is a social gospel, and its denunciations of wealth are by no means mild. It alone of the four Gospels has preserved to us the parable of the Prodigal Son, the parable of the Good Samaritan and the story of Zacchæus. It portrays not Jesus the Doer of Mighty Deeds nor Jesus the Messianic King, but it reveals with surpassing tenderness Jesus the Great Physician.

These three Gospels are photographic in their character. They represent Jesus as caught upon the sensitive plate of three different types of mind. In the fourth Gospel we have something more nearly akin to a painted portrait, possibly less accurate in some details and yet for that very reason having a profounder insight into the deeper truths of character. I have read somewhere of a portrait artist before whom some men found it unwise to sit because unconsciously the artist painted not only the external apearance but also the inner soul of his subject. John's Gospel is such a great artistic interpretation of the soul of

Jesus. It was probably written in Ephesus by a group of disciples of John who looked to him as their authority and therefore bears a relation to John similar to that which the Gospel of Mark bears to Peter. It is an attempt to interpret the fact of Christ into the terms of the prevalent mystical philosophy of the day. It sets forth Jesus the Son of God. It is the profoundly religious Gospel which appeals to us at our moments of highest exaltation and deepest need. "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." "In the world ye shall have tribulation. Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." "And the word became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth and we all beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father."

I have said that the Bible is a great literature, but I cannot stop here. The Bible is not only a great literature—it is the great literature of the spirit. It lives and endures not for its sheer literary power, though that is often exquisite, but because of its spiritual message. God seems to have given to the Greeks a genius for perception of artistic form, to the Romans a genius for organization, to the Anglo-Saxons for self-government, to the modern Germans for the application of science to problems of community life, and to the ancient Hebrews a genius for religion. Here in the Bible are the greatest answers the world has ever heard to

those irrepressible questions of every age concerning justice and duty, sin and punishment, life and death.

Because of this fact the world has always honored the Bible as inspired, and the more carefully we study it the more marvellous that inspiration becomes to us and the more capable of inspiring us in turn. But in recognizing the inspiration of the Bible we must beware that we do not convey by that term the impression of infallibility or of a uniform degree of inspiration. The Bible is not a dead level. The day is past when we can appeal to it with superstitious confidence in its infallibility to settle all kinds of questions like the old lady who was distressed by the problem of whether to dye her old dress as spring approached or simply to turn it. She opened her Bible at random and this verse from Isaiah settled the question for her: "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?"!

The Bible is, rather, the record of a growing revelation, of a deepening insight into religious truths. There are passages in it which are only of value to remind us of the pit whence we were digged and the rock whence we were hewn. Read over again, for example, the story of Jepthah's daughter in Judges. In the heat of battle Jepthah vows for the sake of victory to sacrifice to Jehovah the first thing which comes to greet him on his return home. His daughter proves to be the unwitting victim. She retires into the mountains for a season to pre-

pare for death and then returns. And the Book of Judges says, without pity, without any expression of moral indignation, and yet with commendable reserve, "And he did unto her according to his vow." Look at it squarely in the face! What is it? Human sacrifice unreproved on the pages of the Bible! That shows the depths out of which the religion of the Bible came. If you want to see the heights turn to the Prophet Micah and read these great verses in the sixth chapter:

"Wherewith shall I come before Jehovah, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves a year old? Will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

But some one says: "If the Bible is not infallible, if it is not all equally inspired, how can I tell what is authoritative and what is not?" Fortunately the Bible carries within itself its own standard and touchstone. You can take the teachings of Jesus, they form a rule—a golden rule—by which you can measure the moral elevation of all the rest of the Bible. You can do this frankly and freely because Jesus himself did it. He had no false notions as to

the infallibility or permanent validity of the Old Testament. He did not hesitate to call attention to things which were written there only because of the hardness of men's hearts:

"Ye have heard that it was said to them of old times 'Thou shalt not kill,' but I say unto you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment. Ye have heard that it was said 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy,' but I say love thine enemies and pray for them that persecute you."

There is one last word which I wish to say about the Bible—possibly the most important word of all. When I was a boy I was taught to think of the history of the world as divided into two dispensations—one back in Bible times, when God was in the world working miracles, speaking to men in dreams and visions, personally guiding and inspiring them, and the other the time in which we lived, when God seemed to have gone away and left the world to run itself. He was no longer expected to work miracles, and if we wished to come into communication with him we must read the letter which he had written to us and left behind in the Bible. God's messages no longer came to us in living, vital touch upon our souls. To know his will we had to travel back across the centuries and rely on the experiences which other men had had. I no longer feel that way about it. I believe there is only one dispen-

sation—that God is just as much in the world as he ever was; that there are just as many miracles, just as many angels, just as many visions as there ever were; that his presence broods across the hills beside this western sea just as truly as it did at Bethel; and that great figures of our own age like Tennyson and Browning, like Tolstoy and Lincoln, like Jane Addams and Helen Keller are also among the prophets!

The great thing which the Bible can do for our religious life is not to present to us an artificially preserved message from God to which we can go to learn his will. It is rather so to present to us the spectacle of other men in other days hearing his voice and finding help in his presence that we shall be inspired to follow their example and open our lives to the indwelling of his spirit. We also are to be responsive to his still, small voice and go out into our world to find every common bush aflame with God. The supreme value of the Bible is not merely to find God there, but to gain inspiration to find him here. Each age must renew for itself something akin to the experience recorded in the Bible.

CHAPTER IV

JESUS

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JESUS

I REMEMBER reading as a boy a little book which told of a preacher who noticed in his congregation one Sunday a man of peculiar winsomeness and responsiveness, so that he felt himself inspired by his presence to change his sermon here and there—making it more simple, more deeply spiritual. After the congregation had gone out he found himself alone with the man and lo! the man was Jesus! I would speak and I would have you listen as though Jesus himself sat here listening. I would not enter into any controversy about Jesus. I only desire, as effectively as I may, to bear witness as to what I find in him.

What I have to say is intensely personal. I am a Congregationalist, but this is no authoritative pronouncement of Congregational views, for in the nature of the case each Congregational minister is independent and can speak only for himself. I am a graduate of the University of California and of Yale Divinity School, but what I say is no mere parrot-like repetition of the teaching of any school. It is rather an attempt to set forth a personal answer to this question: "What may Jesus mean to a man who was reared in a Christian home,

who has spent seven years in study at two typical modern universities and who has lived eagerly and sympathetically in the full current of modern civic life for ten years more?''

To begin with, I think it is beyond question that the distinguishing characteristic of the modern point of view in everything is the use of the inductive method. That man is a medievalist who starts with a dogma and marshalls arguments in its support. The dogma may be true, the arguments may be valid, but the method is medieval. That man is a modernist who starts with the facts, sits down humbly before them and seeks to understand them, and is willing to follow where the facts lead, regardless of all dogmas, prejudices or preconceived ideas. For men trained in the scientific atmosphere of modern life the most helpful approach to Christ will be the approach not by way of dogma, but along the line of the inductive method. And surely he who said to his disciples ''Come and ye shall see'' will welcome our approach to him in this spirit of scientific humility.

As I have reconstructed for myself during the last seventeen years the meaning of Christ I therefore begin here: Whatever else Jesus was or was not he was certainly a man. The record of the Gospels as I read them reveals to me a genuine human being. He lived and felt as a man. He ''increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.'' He faced

temptation. He often sat wearied by the well-curb of life. He knew defeat and failure. He longed for human companionship and he also sought for divine companionship in prayer. He wept at the tomb of Lazarus. He cried out on the cross in anguish of body and of spirit.

To realize the genuine humanity of Jesus is a great gain. As a boy in Sunday school I did not get this conception of him. The Christ presented to me then was not a man. He was only masquerading as a man. In reality he was a supernatural being with unlimited knowledge and power who was rather thinly disguised in garments of humanity. He was really a being apart from me or my possible experience. Now all this is changed and Jesus has for me a greater reality and a higher personal value because I believe firmly in the genuineness of his humanity. It puts new power into texts like "And the word became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth" and "being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death" and "As the Father hath sent me into the world, even so send I you."

But Jesus was no ordinary man. There are certain facts about him which have, it seems to me, tremendous significance. First of all is this: Not only was he recognized as a great teacher in his own day but since his day it has developed that he is indeed the supreme teacher of humanity in matters of conduct and religion.

His ethical standards have conquered the world —not yet in actual attainment, sad to say—but as unchallenged expressions of the ideal. Men who profess no religious faith, men bitterly opposed to organized religion, yet find in him the world's supreme teacher of ethics.

But you cannot detach the teacher from the man himself. Jesus gave to the world not only its supreme teaching, but its supreme example of the incorporation of the teaching into daily life. He lived his message. So far as we can see he bears no shadow upon his character. There is no stain upon his garments. Nor is this purity external only. It seems to be an inner fact, for nowhere does he betray consciousness of sin. He stands as the world's sinless, unstained human life. You probably remember how Sidney Lanier in his poem "The Crystal" reviews the great figures of history, finding in each much inspiration, but also some limitation, until at last he comes to Christ, when he bursts forth in these great words:

"But Thee, but Thee, O sov'reign Seer of time,
But Thee, O poet's Poet, Wisdom's Tongue,
But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
O all man's Comrade, Servant, King and Priest,—
What 'if' or 'yet,' what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
What least defect or shadow of defect,
What rumor, tattled by an enemy,
Or inference loose, what lack of grace
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's or death's—
Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
Jesus, good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ?"

No man can contemplate the fact of Christ without being struck by the tremendous influence which he has wielded in the world. His "line is gone out through all the earth." He wrote no books; yet thousands of books owe to him their inspiration. He painted no pictures; yet the whole world of painting, sculpture, music, even architecture, has been changed by him. He held no official position; yet his influence has changed and is today changing more vitally than ever the whole social order, reproving greed and inhumanity and calling men to social brotherhood and human service.

Nor is this influence a mere vague, persuasive, indefinite something—it is very intimate and personal. Thousands of men and women through the centuries rise up to make confession that he has been the dominant power within their lives—that they are what they are because of his presence. Here is something deeper than the influence of his teaching or his example. It is more like the influence of a mother over her son, to use a splendid illustration which has only recently come to my attention from the paper of a theological student. The mother instructs her boy on points of honor and morality. She tells him the perils of dishonesty and the tragedy of unchastity. In time the boy finds himself away from home in a great city. In his poverty and loneliness temptation comes to him. What is it saves him? His mother's sound advice? Not that alone. Her

beautiful and pure life? Not even that alone. It is the feeling of personal love and responsibility that he has toward her which makes her advice and example dynamic in his life. He does not want to be unworthy of her love and trust. It has been even so with Christ down through the ages. He has been the great redemptive personality of the world. Men have been saved, not by the cold word of his teaching, not by the distant spectacle of his example, but by warm personal love and loyalty to him.

There is a great scene in "The Piper" by Josephine Preston Peabody in which the Piper argues with "the lonely man," the Christ on the cross of the wayside shrine. The Piper pleads to be allowed to keep for his very own the children of Hamelin Town, but at last he cannot—he surrenders his will to Christ's. Just outside of Trinity Church, Boston, there stands a statue of Phillips Brooks—erect, manly, joyous—preaching with radiant power. But behind him stands the veiled figure of the Christ, who reaches one hand forward, resting it as in benediction on the shoulder of the great preacher. These things are but typical of human experience with Christ. His personal influence, his redemptive power, have been simply tremendous in the world—and never more so than at this very hour.

One fact more about Christ crowns all that goes before. He has become for the world its noblest picture of God. How he has illumi-

nated our conception of God! "Who is God?" we ask—and we hear his words: "God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." "But where is God?" we ask. "Here," says Jesus; "here in the rain which he causes to fall on the just and the unjust; here in the sparrows, not one of which falls without his notice; here in the lilies of the field, which are clothed by his love and wisdom." "But what is God's attitude toward men?" we ask. And his words are like music in our ears as he tells us the parable of the Prodigal Son. "God is like that," he says; "God is a loving Father; when ye pray say: 'Our Father.'" "But we crave for more," our hearts cry out, "Show us the Father"—and his answer peals forth, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

And, explain it as you will, this has actually come to pass. Jesus has become for the world its picture of God. "After Jesus it is his religion or no religion," says a great German scholar. The fact is that the world today thinks of God in terms of Jesus Christ. God cannot be less than Jesus; he must be like Jesus—and more. Our God is an infinite Christ!

Behind all this there lies the marvellous self-consciousness of Jesus. He had a realization of his relationship with God, and the overflowing power which resulted from it is central in his life. Upon the lips of what other character in history can you put such words as these:

"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness," "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest, take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls"? Yet these words do not sound immodest or presumptuous on the lips of Jesus—they simply express the experience of humanity with him.

What shall we say concerning such a life as this? What answer shall we make to such a remarkable and cumulative series of facts? How shall we classify such a personality? What else can we say than that he was divine, that in Jesus God revealed himself in terms of humanity, that he is the supreme expression in human form of the life and character of God? "God was in him reconciling the world unto himself." "And so the Word became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth and we behold his glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father."

But along with this sense of the divinity of Christ there goes a great inspiration, a vision which may well make us all pause and tremble. Divinity is not something apart from humanity —the divine life which dwelt in Jesus in all its fulness dwells also in you and me. Our lives too are a part of the life of God. That electric current which in Jesus became incandescent, to borrow Winston Churchill's figure, thrills

through us also. He was given to us to show us what a divine humanity might be. We are to attain "unto the fulness of the stature of Christ." He is at last to be "The first born among many brethren." What Jesus is humanity shall at last become!

You have noticed, doubtless, that I have said nothing about the virgin birth. There is very little that needs to be said. It has no bearing on my faith in the divinity of Christ. He was divine because of his character, his personality —not because of the origin of his physical body. Did he have two human parents? Did he have only one? Settle it for yourselves according to the evidence. It is purely a historical question and has no bearing on the authority of Jesus. You might be able to prove beyond possibility of questioning that he was born without any human parents at all—and yet we would not worship him unless he had also been all that he was in his character and teaching. You may decide that the evidence for the virgin birth is so slender that it is imperative for you to think of Jesus as born like all the rest of us, of two human parents. Personally, I should welcome that conclusion, for it would only the more definitely make his divinity a moral and spiritual thing. It would make the fact of the incarnation only more genuine and thoroughgoing. It would bring him closer to our common humanity in his origin, and therefore make the possibility of following

him up the heights all the stronger. But at the same time it seems only reasonable to feel that so remarkable a life may well have come into the world in a remarkable way, and I believe that in the annunciation we have an echo of a wonderful experience which came to Mary and which ought to become the experience of every mother—"For lo the Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee." When we look at things with clear eyes we shall see that a birth by two parents is just as miraculous—involves the presence and power of God just as truly—as would a birth by only one human parent. The world can easily afford to dispense with the idea that Jesus had a physical birth different from ours, if in return it can gain potentially for every mother the experience of Mary of the nearness and presence of God in the great miracle of bringing a new life and personality into the world.

You have doubtless noticed also that I have said nothing about the miracles of Jesus. This has been a deliberate omission because I do not regard them as primary evidence for his divinity. I believe that unusual events, which we call miracles, accompanied the life of Jesus. Given so remarkable a personality, the miracles become only the inevitable overflow of its influence in the world. A little boy learns to play a violin—becomes proficient enough to play, let us say, Handel's "Largo" with fair accuracy.

The time is correct, the notes are true. We compliment the performance. But let a great master of the violin appear. Let Kubelik or Ysaye play Handel's "Largo." What happens? "Tears are in our eyes and in our ears the murmur of a thousand years!" We see a great river rolling to the sea, we feel anew the nobility of life, our experience is one of spiritual renewal and we come back to the concert hall when the last note dies away as those who have returned from a far country. Our ordinary human lives are like a little boy playing his violin. The results are very modest and limited. But Jesus was a master of life. From him no such meager results could possibly be expected. The miracles are exactly what we should expect.

But while I believe the miracles of healing, I do not base my faith in the divinity of Christ upon them. His power to achieve results beyond ordinary human experience does not guarantee his divinity, for if he had worked miracles ten times greater than any recorded in the New Testament and had not been at the same time a good man, we should not build churches in his name or worship him today! It is not power that commands the allegiance of thoughtful men; it is the moral and spiritual principles which direct the use of whatever measure of power may be given.

One miracle, however, deserves special mention—the resurrection. In some way after the

death on Calvary Jesus came back to his disciples, who were scattered, discouraged, beaten, and convinced them that he was not holden of death but was still alive. The accounts of the resurrection are not clear nor harmonious. Some of them emphasize a reanimation of his physical body, yet he did not resume the old physical life. Through the stories runs another tendency which has always appealed to me more strongly than the emphasis on his physical body—the emphasis on his spiritual body—the emphasis on his spiritual presence. Mary suddenly finds him with her in the Garden, the two on the Emmaus road find themselves not alone but walking with him, Paul meets him on the desert road leading to Damascus. This experience with Jesus was the most conspicuous element in very early Christian preaching. Explain the resurrection how you will, the fact remains that the supreme effect that Jesus had upon his disciples was to convince them that he had risen from the dead and was alive again forevermore.

One important subject, inseparably connected with our thought of Christ, has been deliberately left to the last—the atonement. Why did Jesus die upon the cross? Various answers have been given at different times in the history of the Church. The earliest disciples simply pointed to the great fifty-third chapter of Isaiah with its picture of the suffering servant of Jehovah and said that Jesus died in

fulfillment of prophecy. Later other explanations arose: that he died to pay humanity's debt to God incurred by Adam's sin; that he died to satisfy the divine justice by receiving on himself the punishment due the sin of the world. God, having received payment, having exacted justice, was then, men said, in a position to forgive men and reconciliation between God and man became possible.

None of these theories appeals to the modern point of view. They are too legalistic. They seem to concern a God who is an immense Shylock or an implacable judge interested in abstract laws, rather than God the Father of his children as revealed by Jesus. What then? Shall we take the crosses from off our churches and cease to sing

> "In the Cross of Christ I glory
> Towering o'er the wrecks of time?"

Not so. Such a sacrifice would be as pathetic as it is needless.

Behind every great doctrine of the past, however crudely or even repulsively stated, there lurks a great idea—a truth dear and necessary to humanity. The atonement is true; it only requires a modern interpretation to release once more in the world the tremendous power which it holds. What is that interpretation? Something like this: Jesus' death on the cross is not an isolated event; it is rather the symbolic and supreme expression of the ever-pres-

ent and dominant spirit of his life—of service for humanity in a spirit of absolute love and self-sacrifice. That spirit came to its final dramatic climax in the laying down of his own life. That act and all that lies behind it in the years of patient self-giving in Galilean villages and on the streets of Jerusalem do effect a reconciliation between man and God. But how? By changing the mind of God? Not in the least! God's mind did not need to be changed. He has always loved and sought his wandering children. How then? By changing our mind. Jesus died not to make God good but to make us good!

"But," some one asks, "how does the spectacle of Jesus' life of self-sacrifice culminating on Calvary make us good?" Only by touching our lives with a divine purpose to live in the same spirit of self-sacrifice and join Jesus in his search for and service to God's lost children. The world is not to be saved by Jesus alone, not by his three hours' agony on the cross merely, but by the thousands of men and women who themselves become saviors and give themselves unselfishly even as did he. This young medical student in London is to hear the call of the deep-sea fishermen and give his life to the people on the coast of Labrador. This young woman is to respond to the need of the great city, and spend her life in the nineteenth ward in Chicago as a friend and helper of the foreigner and the forgotten. This young Scotch

weaver is to die on his knees in the little African village, that slavery may cease and brotherhood be born. Thousands of nameless and humble souls shall in the spirit of the cross give themselves not to selfish ends but to unselfish service in cottages and hospitals and workshops. And so Christ shall be reduplicated in a myriad of saviors and the world be reconciled to the God who is a God of love. Thus the atonement—the "at-one-ment"—is continually and eternally in process.

All this ought to make it quite clear to us in what essential Christianity consists. It is not a matter of theories about the person of Jesus nor speculations as to the mystery of the relation of his soul to the all-enfolding life of God. Speculation is interesting and has its place. But a man is not made a Christian by coming to any particular intellectual convictions as to the nature of Christ. Christianity is rather a matter of personal devotion and loyalty to Christ and his interpretation of life and duty. If only one is sincere in his love for Jesus and his desire to reproduce his life in the world, we need not fear that such a one will hold unworthy views of his Lord. Continued experience with Christ will lead him to profounder insight and greater reverence.

"If Jesus Christ is a man,
And only a man—I say
That of all mankind I will cleave to him
And to him will I cleave alway."

You may begin there! But to love and serve and follow Christ will, I believe, inevitably lead you on to the second stanza of the poem:

> "If Jesus Christ is a God—
> And the only God—I swear
> I will follow him through heaven and hell
> The Earth, the Sea, and the Air!"

CHAPTER V

IMMORTALITY

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IMMORTALITY

THERE are certain difficulties in the way of believing in immortality. The most obvious one lies in the fact that in our experience no one has returned from the life after death to tell us about it. In this statement I am assuming that, in spite of the remarkably interesting data collected by the Society for Psychical Research, the evidence is still insufficient to prove beyond any doubt the reality of spirit communication. I believe we should be open-minded on the subject, and it is not at all impossible that evidence may yet be forthcoming in this department of investigation which shall be conclusive. But for the present let us assume what is practically true for all of us in our individual experience—that no one has come back to us from beyond the grave to assure us of his continued existence. What then?

This difficulty does not seem to me so overwhelming as it used to be in the days before I realized how imperfect is our apparatus of senses for perceiving reality and how fragmentary is even our best knowledge of the universe. The world is simply full of things

that we have no sense organs to perceive. For example: vibrations which come at a given rate of speed are interpreted by our eyes in terms of light and other vibrations which come at a very much lower intensity are interpreted by our ears in terms of sound, but it is quite certain that there are colors which we cannot see simply because our eyes cannot interpret light vibrations above or below a certain rate of speed, and so also there are sounds which are pitched too high or too low for us to hear at all simply because our ears are not equipped to receive them. This means that our perception of the universe is only a fragment of the whole. If the total of reality be represented by a circle we compass it with our sense organs only by a few small arcs here and there on the circumference. The fact, therefore, that we do not see nor hear our friends after they die is not final by any means. There is abundant room in the universe for life of a higher and more complex character to go on right about us all the time without our perceiving it. And it is altogether probable that to be set free from the limitations of the flesh is of necessity to cease from fleshly means of communication.

There is an illustration from nature which throws some light on this point. I once read a story of some larvæ at the bottom of a pond holding a discussion as to why from time to time members of their company that had climbed up a water-lily stem to the surface of the

pond had never returned. These dwellers at the bottom finally made a solemn compact that the next one to disappear beyond the surface should return to tell his friends all about it. Then one of the chief spokesmen began to feel an irresistible desire to climb up the water-lily stem and, in a few moments, he found himself safe and sound on top of the water-lily pad drying in the sun. Then a wonderful thing happened. He passed through a transformation the possibility of which he had never dreamed, and before long found himself a dragon-fly skimming over the surface of the pond, his beautiful gauzy wings iridescent in the sunshine. As he looked down into the dark surface of the pond it came over him how utterly impossible it was that he should ever penetrate its depths again and tell the larvæ in the mud at the bottom how glorious was the life above.

The second difficulty which has almost paralyzed the faith of many men and women in immortality is the apparent dependence of thought upon the brain. Modern physiological psychology has made this dependence very clear and evident. It has even localized in the brain different departments of mental activity, so that by injuring certain convolutions you can destroy, for example, the memory for words. The memory for faces, for tunes, for locations still remains, but the memory for words is gone. The materialism of the age from which we are just emerging did not hesitate to say that the

brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile and the salivary glands secrete saliva. A speaker holding this point of view once said to a group of people in a room "Give me an axe and in a few moments I can put this piano out of commission so that no more tunes will ever come from it," and the inference was that with equal facility the more delicate instrument of the brain could be destroyed and with it the music of life. But an answer was given that same evening by another speaker who said that even though the piano be destroyed the pianist yet remained, and there was no reason why he might not be given another piano in another room and produce even more wonderful music than before.

This is, to my mind, a truer point of view—the physical brain is merely the instrument upon which the soul plays its music. Surely that Wisdom and Power which gave to the soul this instrument can be trusted to provide a better instrument when this one is no longer responsive to the touch. After all, to say that the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile is utterly unscientific, for thought and bile are not in the same category. One is the physical product of a physical organ and to make the parallel hold true the actual physical product of brain action would have to be put in the fourth place in the equation instead of the thought, which is merely a concomitant of brain activity.

Let us turn from the negative to the positive side of the question and set forth the reasons that may impel thoughtful men and women to a faith in immortality.

First of all, I am impressed with the universality of this conviction of a continued life after death. Wherever you go around the world, even in darkest Africa, you find some kind of conception of immortality, and as far back as you can go into history, even to the mute testimony dug up from the graves of prehistoric man, you find this same faith in life after death.

The conviction of immortality is like laughter —a distinctly human characteristic setting us apart from all other beings. It attains to the dignity of an instinct. We are coming to realize in this day that instincts are not to be despised, but that they may be profound witnesses to the presence of mighty forces and the working of an unseen hand.

John Fiske in one of his books gives a telling illustration of the way in which certain human capacities have developed in response to realities in the outer world which called them forth. There was a time in the evolutionary process when life upon this planet was blind, but light played upon it and, because there were things to see, living creatures developed pigmented spots sensitive to light and then imperfect eyes and finally the human eye with its capacity to see the beauty of the dawn and to trace the

courses of the planets. So, too, there was a time when all living forms were deaf, but, because later there were sounds to hear, there developed in the process of evolution sense organs which could interpret sound and music and human voices.

The suggestion seems to me to be a powerful one that this world-wide instinct for immortality, this great craving of the human spirit, has not developed aimlessly and foolishly but is a response sent forth to a great reality outside which is calling to us so that some day we shall not only hear the birds and see the stars but shall also perceive the eternal life.

A second thing which helps me in my faith in immortality is the fact of Christ. Not only does humanity at large and on the average believe in immortality, but the supreme human spirit of all the world believed in it too. When Jesus came he incorporated into his teachings a clear consciousness of the life eternal: "Lay not up treasures on earth," he said; "lay up your treasure in heaven where moth and rust do not corrupt nor thieves break through and steal." "Let not your heart be troubled," he said; "in my Father's house are many rooms. I go to prepare a place for you."

And, after they had crucified him, in some mysterious way he came back to his disciples and convinced them he was still alive. As to the method of the resurrection I am entirely in the dark, but as to the fact of it I see no ground

for reasonable doubt. Something changed this little group of broken-hearted and discouraged men; something happened which transformed their cowardice and sent them out into the great pagan Roman world conquering and to conquer. They said from the very beginning with the utmost emphasis that it was because Jesus was not holden of death, but had appeared to them and that they knew he was living forevermore. I cannot but believe they were right, and all this contributes no small reinforcement to my faith that

> "Life is ever lord of death
> And Love can never lose its own."

A third reason for believing in immortality grows out of our instinctive and ineradicable faith in the moral integrity of the universe. The great fact of conscience is a testimony to a conviction as wide as the race that there is a difference between right and wrong and that fundamentally and ultimately the forces of the universe are on the side of right. But, as a matter of fact, we do not see right or wrong meeting their just deserts in the lives of many of the men around about us. We have on one hand the spectacle of men seeking their own selfish aims, cynically and brutally treading into the mire the lives of their fellow beings, outraging the most fundamental laws of honesty and fair play and then living prosperously all their lives and dying quietly and pain-

lessly in bed; and we see other men who have "followed the gleam," who have put their lives in harmony with the highest dictates of moral integrity, beaten down by disease, by defeat, by treachery, in the very prime of their manhood. We see Henry Drummond wasting the last years of his life in a losing fight against an obscure and painful illness and Robert Louis Stevenson banished to Samoa and finally cut off in the very prime of his productive power. Our faith in the moral integrity of the universe seems to demand a day beyond tomorrow.

As Washington Gladden puts it: "For the wrongs that never are righted here, there is recompense hereafter: the rogues that go unwhipped, the hypocrites that stalk abroad unsuspected, the giant oppressors who gather by tribute a wealth of continents and build their fortunes on the ruins of homes,—for all these surely retribution is coming; the mills of the Gods grind slowly but no malefactor is done with them when man screws down his coffin lid. Do not distrust that sense of justice in your breast which cries out against the honor and power and fame which come to greedy, unscrupulous, cruel men. There is a day after today."

I have a feeling that there is a reason for believing in immortality in the very incompleteness of our own lives. William James has a humorous passage in which he sets forth the different possibilities which he realizes to be latent within his life. How he might have been

many kinds of man, from a soldier or an Arctic explorer to a fop and a "lady killer," and has ended up by being a gray, dry-as-dust professor. We all of us share this experience. Personally, my earliest ambition was to be a pirate! As the disadvantages of piracy as a life-work became evident I decided to be a naval officer. This in time was given up for civil engineering, and behold me now far from all such adventurous careers—an obscure sky-pilot who only now and then from his front windows looks longingly out to the great ships as they pass through the Golden Gate out to the Pacific.

Even in the line which we at last choose as our own no one of us reaches completion. Though we live to be a hundred years old our lives are still bafflingly incomplete. You have probably heard the story of the old German professor, a philologist, who had specialized on the alphabet. He was dying. His students gathered around him and said, "Our dear Herr Professor, your life has been blameless, one of scholarly rectitude. You have become the world's greatest authority on the alphabet. You surely have no regrets." And the old Professor said, "My young friends, I feel that my life has been terribly misspent. I have tried to master the alphabet. I have been too superficial. If I had life to live over again, I would concentrate on the letter A!"

Why this incompleteness of life? Why does it stretch out so lavishly and beckon to us in

every direction we turn? Why are our achievements but little fragments of the boundless possibilities which we see around us? Personally, I believe that this very incompleteness of life is God's pledge to us of a continued life where we shall go on to do the things that here we longed to do and did not, where the dreams at last come true. After all

> "A man's reach should exceed his grasp
> Or what's a heaven for?"

Our faith in immortality receives confirmation and reinforcement also from the modern emphasis upon personality. In the last analysis the one thing which we know most surely in the world is our own self-conscious existence. Descartes, you will remember, started out to doubt everything that he could, but finally struck bottom with this proposition "Dubito, ergo sum"—"I doubt, therefore I am." The one thing beneath which he could not go was his own personal existence. A book like Professor Bowne's essay on "Personalism" is wonderfully strengthening to one's faith in immortality and helps to deliver from the nightmare of materialism. After all, this apparently solid and substantial thing which we call matter requires only a change of pressure or temperature to transform it into liquids, gases, heat, light or some other form of energy. And when you think the thing through you find that we know energy only in relation to per-

sonality. If we believe in the conservation of energy, how much more reasonable to believe in the conservation of personality. It seems to be the noblest and most mysterious form of energy.

Moreover, the nature of the human personality, as it is being revealed by modern psychology, brings many hopeful suggestions. We have recently been hearing a great deal about the subconscious, and have been learning that our personalities are vastly larger than the cross-section of our waking consciousness at any given moment. In this subconscious mind are many marvellous things. One of them is a well-nigh perfect memory. I once attended a class in hypnotism with a group of medical men. A young man before being hypnotized was asked if he remembered any sermon he had ever heard. Being a normal young man, he did not! After he was hypnotized the operator asked him the same question and he said, "Yes, I remember the sermon Bishop Potter preached when I was confirmed." "Repeat what you remember of it," said the operator. The young man stood up, announced the text, and began the sermon. I had heard Bishop Potter preach myself, and the resemblances in voice and mannerism were so striking that the experience was positively uncanny.

This subconscious mind is also endowed with a remarkable perception of natural law. Most of us have worked on problems until we have

been tired out, have thrown our book in a corner, and gone to sleep to wake up the next morning and find the whole matter cleared up. Many a minister has worked at a sermon, unable to arrange it satisfactorily, only to have an entirely new arrangement of the argument, logical and effective, occur to him after a night's sleep.

Students of hypnotism tell us that not only has the subconscious mind a high perception of natural law, but it has also a high moral sense and often remains more true and sensitive than the waking consciousness. We have no more than a fragmentary knowledge of telepathy, but this marvellous capacity—developed only in abnormal people now—is doubtless also one of the functions of the subconscious. In this obscure region also lie marvellous reserves of energy and a great store of instincts and intuitions.

All these revelations concerning the marvellous quality of the personality help us to think nobly of the soul and in no wise encourage us to believe in its extinction. Many of its capacities are entirely latent or put to only the most occasional and trifling use in this life. Is not the argument advanced by Hudson a cogent one—that these unused capacities are prophetic of some future life where they shall come fully into action?

Dr. Worcester gives a beautiful and striking illustration in his book, "The Living Word," in which he suggests that, after all, we live three

lives. Let me condense this illustration and give it in my own words. The first is a narrow and restricted pre-natal life which the child lives within the body of its mother. Here in this dark world eyes develop, though there is nothing to see. Here in the silence ears develop, though there is nothing to hear. Little hands develop, though there is nothing to handle, and feet for which there are no paths on which to walk. Then comes the great day of birth and the child emerges out into this wonderful world in which we live, where there is beauty for the eyes to see and music for the ears to hear, where there are deeds of helpfulness for the hands to do, and great roads of service on which the feet may go. Once more, in this world, great longings are developed which are impossible of fulfillment here, "fancies that break through language and escape," marvellous powers and capacities that seem to have no adequate use or expression here. What then? There comes at last another day of birth —which men in their blindness call death— when we pass out of this dark and narrow world of the flesh into the great freedom of the spirit, into that still larger and more untrammelled life where all the aspirations and capacities which have developed more or less blindly here shall come to their proper use and high fulfillment.

And now, in closing, may I say a few words about the judgment, and heaven and hell. The

best way to think about the judgment—it seems to me—is to think of it as something automatic and continuous. Every day is a judgment day. The choices we make, the directions in which we send forth our energy, the causes we support, the people we love—these things register themselves, moment by moment, in the fabric of our lives. When we were little boys we used to hear about the Recording Angel, who sat up in heaven writing in a great book the awful deeds of naughty little boys. We secretly hoped that some of ours would get past him unobserved. But how terrible and relentless is the Recording Angel of the new psychology—not seated up in heaven at a safe distance, but seated in the inner citadel of our own lives in the person of this marvellous subconscious memory. Well for a man if he hangs no pictures upon the wall of that memory which he is not willing to have look down upon him forever! "Judge not that ye be not judged," said Jesus. He did not mean by that that we should stop making choices or decisions, but he did mean that the very judgments we make react upon us automatically.

From this conception of the judgment comes a conception of heaven and hell which makes these words stand for something less fantastic and more impressive. Heaven and hell are not places: they are states of mind. A man does not have to wait until he dies, and then wake up again in the life beyond the grave and pinch

himself and say, "Ah, me, let me look about and see whether I am in heaven or hell at last." Heaven and hell begin here. There are men walking the streets of your city and mine today who are in hell, and we have all known men and women who in this world had nevertheless already claimed their citizenship in heaven.

It will be a great advance, it seems to me, if we can get rid of the idea that death necessarily crystallizes our lives—that at that moment they become set like a plaster-of-Paris cast, incapable of future development or alteration. I believe there is every reason to trust that the world to come is characterized by eternal progress and eternal love. Possibly the new penology has something to say about the doctrine of eternal punishment. If parents punish children only to correct them, if the school principal is allowed to punish his pupils only to reform them, if the judge of the Juvenile Court is not so much concerned to vindicate the law as to save and restore the youthful law-breaker, if the ultimate goal of all legal punishment is only to protect society and the only complete protection of society lies in the reformation of the criminal, then the great possibility suggests itself that this highest human conception of crime and punishment cannot be higher than God's and the doctrine of eternal punishment—continuing forever and achieving nothing—is made simply impossible in the face of the new penology. That the hell which begins in this life will

continue in the life to come is altogether probable, though we must make great allowance for the fact that in the life to come we shall be free from these physical bodies which are the source of so much of our trouble. But if hell continues God's love will also continue, and I do not believe that that love can be eternally set aside, but that somehow, sometime, every soul in the far country will come to itself in deep repentance and return to the Father's house.

Dr. J. H. Williams, of Redlands, used to tell this story: A revivalist once came to a New England town and swept all before him. The last night he preached vigorously on hell and invited all who wished to go to heaven with him to stand up. All arose except the village philanthropist, a rather eccentric old gentleman, who was unknown to the revivalist. The exhorter pointed his finger at him and said witheringly: "My dear friend, what do you expect to do when you go to the other place?" The reply, spoken in a quiet drawl, was distinctly audible throughout the room. "Well, after what you have been saying about it tonight, I calculate to start in and try to make a few improvements!"

Let us have faith to believe that there is no corner in God's universe where he will not eternally be trying to make improvements!

CHAPTER VI

RELIGION IN DAILY LIFE

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THE darkest problem of life is the mystery of evil. If there is a God, and if he is good, why does he permit a world to exist with the pain and suffering, the sin and sorrow of this dark world in which we live? Does it not seem sometimes "as if some lesser God had made the world"? Are there not moments in all our lives when the terrible spectacle of war, immorality and greed, of man's inhumanity to man, the cries of pain and anguish, the mute appeals from the eyes of those who suffer, call us to rebellion against a world in which such things are possible? Do we not cry out with Omar:

> "Ah, Love! could you and I with Him conspire
> To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
> Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
> Remould it nearer to the Heart's desire!"

To this dark problem two solutions have been proposed which deserve attention. The first is the ancient Hebrew solution. It had the merit of great simplicity: the suffering and pain which come into your life, come as the punishment for the sins you have committed. If you lived a perfectly righteous life none of these

terrible things could happen to you. This was the orthodoxy against which the Book of Job protested. That great drama of the inner life tells the story of Job, a God-fearing, evil-hating man upon whom fell terrible calamities in swift succession. His friends hasten to advise him that all these must be in punishment for some hideous secret sin which he has kept from the rest of the world. Job protests his innocence of any crime worthy of so overwhelming chastisement and in the great oath of clearing he maintains the integrity of his ways before God.

To this protest of the Book of Job Jesus added the weight of his teaching when he asked the Pharisees of his day if they counted those on whom the tower of Siloam fell or the Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with the sacrifices as sinners above other men. Yet this idea that all suffering is punishment for sin had a curious revival at the time of the San Francisco earthquake and fire, when I actually heard people in the Southern California city where I then lived announce that this disaster was a judgment on San Francisco for its wickedness! Now it is true, doubtless, that honesty is the best policy and that, by and large, the loyalty of any man to moral standards makes in the direction of comfort and prosperity. It is ultimately true, of course, that the way of the transgressor is hard. But it is no longer tolerable for modern men and women to turn the

text around and assure everyone who finds the way hard before him that he is but receiving the just punishment of his transgression. The old orthodox Hebrew explanation of the presence of pain and sorrow does not meet our needs.

Over against this ancient solution there is a new one, fresh and crisp, with the paint still gleaming on it. It is the solution presented by our Christian Science friends: There is no evil, no pain, no disease, no suffering. God is all and in all. God cannot know or behold these things. Hence they have no real existence; they are mere errors of mortal mind. This solution is even simpler than the old Hebrew orthodoxy, but it has a very painful defect—what you drive out at the door comes promptly back in at the window. "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet," and if all the evil, pain, disease and sorrow in the world are mere errors of mortal mind we have only to change the form of our original question and it still haunts us as before: If God is good and all in all, if pain and disease and evil have no real existence, why did he not create a world also free from these errors of mortal mind? I don't care whether you call wife-beating a sin or merely an error of mortal mind, the problem of what to do with the wife-beater is still before the court. The disease that laid low Robert Louis Stevenson may be tuberculosis or it may be merely an error of mortal mind, but in either case the

problem is not essentially different—Stevenson is gone in the very prime of his powers.

I confess that I have no completely satisfactory solution to this dark question, nor have I been able to discover one in my reading. But there are some considerations which it seems to me point in the direction of a solution, and there are some practical helps for actually meeting the concrete problem in daily life which are of comfort and which I can set forth to you. There is light enough to travel by, even here.

Let us take up the problem of moral evil. The possibility of doing wrong seems to be absolutely essential to any rugged or vigorous morality. Goodness can only achieve the grandeur of moral character when it is not automatic, but freely chosen in the face of evil. Of course, as John Fiske long ago pointed out, it is easy to ask, "Just how much evil, then, do you think is necessary?" But the question can be squarely met: "Not a bit of evil is necessary; only the possibility of it." As a matter of fact, I believe that evil is not eternal, and that ultimately it shall cease to be, not because it is impossible but because it is not chosen.

A capital illustration may be found in the difference between a mechanical orchestrion and a symphony orchestra. The orchestrion is a clever mechanical device. A roll of perforated paper is fed over a series of openings communicating by means of air pressure with various sets of musical instruments—piano, flute,

drums, cymbals, etc. If the record has been correctly perforated the tempo of the resulting music is mathematically exact; if the instruments are first correctly tuned the harmony is equally perfect. A fine orchestrion is worth listening to. In an orchestra the situation is different. Here you have fifty or sixty different players. Each artist has to learn how to tune up his instrument, how to play it, how to read the score, how to interpret and respond to the conductor's signals. The tuning up of an orchestra is an ear-torturing experience. An orchestra rehearsal with the violins coming in half a beat late, or the trombone four beats too soon, is filled with considerable error of mortal mind. But in the end, when your orchestra is trained, you have music which is flexible and expressive, which can interpret shades of meaning and heights of aspiration forever out of range of the orchestrion; for behind the orchestra are living human spirits responding to the interpretative genius of the leader.

So I believe it is with the world. God might have made us all incapable of doing wrong—mere pipes in a mechanical orchestrion. But God has not made that kind of world. He is making a world which is more like a great orchestra, where each one of us must tune his own instrument and learn to play the score and respond to the signals of the Leader. We are in the tuning-up period now. But be patient, master your own instrument, learn the score and

gradually the perfect music will emerge, even as the *Pilgrims' Chorus* emerges from the Venusberg music in *Tannhauser*.

From the problem of moral evil let us turn now to the pain and suffering, often undeserved, often so utterly irreconciliable with the way in which we should order the world were we in supreme control. Here is a mother bearing six or eight children, doing heroic service in the world, and passing her last years not in peaceful enjoyment of work well done but racked with disease and pain. Here is a father who has tried to be a good father to his children, only to find at last that they do not all rise up to call him blessed, but that the son who bears his name has dragged it in the dirt, and that all the last feeble years of life must be spent in unremitting toil to pay his obligations and save him from the penitentiary. Here is a working man, who wanted to work for an honest living, breaking down with disease in an unsanitary factory and seeing his half-grown children forced into the mill. If these are the ways of God, how can they be justified?

Probably they cannot be justified with our present incomplete knowledge of the entire scheme of things and our limited outlook into this vast, sounding house of labor. We can only trust

> "That nothing walks with aimless feet;
> That not one life shall be destroy'd,
> Or cast as rubbish to the void,
> When God hath made the pile complete."

But in the meantime here are some considerations which should not be left out of the account: For one thing, we need to guard our imaginations. Through the wonderful power of the imagination we can gather all the sorrows of the world together and so concentrate them upon ourselves that the burden is absolutely overwhelming. But as a matter of fact, the burden is not so concentrated. In our own daily life, when we come to think of it, we have always found sufficient courage to meet the trials that have come to us. Indeed, there seem to be latent powers of endurance and resistance, the depth of which we little dream of until some great emergency calls them up. In the hour of our darkest trouble we have not really desired pity. We have been too busy fighting to stop and feel sorry for ourselves. When in our imaginations we gather together all the pain of the world, we ought to gather together also all the world's store of courage, all the latent resources with which to meet this pain. It is also worth remembering that there are certain natural anesthetics which come into play. Beyond certain limits suffering ceases and unconsciousness begins. It is the power of the imagination which makes railroad accidents and steamship wrecks seem so terrible. Deaths which take place one by one, suffering which goes on all through the city in isolated individuals—these things do not appal our imaginations as do a hundred deaths in a wreck or

some other accident. Yet the problem is not essentially different.

There is a consideration of prime importance, also, in the effect which suffering, defeat and loss may have on character. If we receive these things in the right spirit they may ripen and mellow our lives. Certainly we turn in hours of need not to those who have escaped all fires of suffering and trial and have lived a butterfly existence in the world, flitting from one pleasure to another, but rather to those who have been down into the shadows and who have emerged with a new light of sympathy in their eyes and with hands quicker unto good. There is a vast deal of truth in Stephen Phillip's poem, "Marpessa":

"Yet I, being human, human sorrow miss,
The half of music, I have heard men say,
Is to have grieved.

. . . . . .

Out of our sadness have we made this world
So beautiful; The sea sighs in our brain
And in our heart that yearning of the moon.
To all this sorrow was I born, and since
Out of a human womb I came, I am
Not eager to forego it; I would scorn
To elude the heaviness and take the joy,
For pain came with the sap, pangs with the bloom."

Possibly there is some ground for faith that, if out of suffering such spiritual fruitage may come, suffering itself is not wholly meaningless or evil.

This opens the way for a further considera-

tion which must ever be a powerful one with Christian men and women—the fact of the sufferings of Jesus. It means much to us that he was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." If we cannot fully unravel the mystery of suffering we can at least bear it quietly and bravely, as did he. I was much impressed a few years ago by reading of the hospital experience of a man who was stricken down in a strange city, taken to a Roman Catholic hospital and operated on. As he came out of the anesthetic he saw hanging on the wall at the foot of his bed a crucifix. It brought to him this inspiration, that strengthened him through all the days of pain that followed: "He bore his suffering. I can bear mine!" If "it behooved Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory" then our faith is not groundless that suffering is not the irrational thing it sometimes seems.

But, after all, the important thing is not to explain defeat and suffering, but to meet these things—to conquer them and not be gently-complaining victims. Whether we like the world or not we are in it, and we had better make the best of it. You remember Margaret Fuller said, "I accept the Universe," and Carlyle commented, "Egad! she'd better!" The function of religion is not merely to suggest theoretical solutions, but to help men and women to meet in a practical and efficient way the buffetings of daily life.

Here are some practical suggestions for the

application of religion to the every-day situations and difficulties of our lives. How to live above the power of evil and of sorrow may be even more important than a philosophical explanation.

First: Believe in God.

This was the answer that came to Job out of the whirlwind:

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth
When the morning stars sang together,
And all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

The world all about you is wonderful beyond your finding out, filled with intelligence and power. Think of the wisdom that guides the stars, that operates in light and snow and ice, that teaches the wild oxen their ways and the eagle to build her nest. Can you not trust that this wisdom which so marvellously permeates and guides the universe has not fallen short in your daily life? Can you not believe that even here, in spite of seeming contradiction, there is a Divine Wisdom which rules and a Love which watches over all? Is it probable that your little corner of the universe has been overlooked by the Supreme Intelligence? Bryant, watching a lonely waterfowl sailing south against a gray autumn sky, is moved to say:

"He who from zone to zone
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone
Will lead my steps aright."

And Browning puts it even more nobly when he says:

"If I stoop
Into a dark tremendous sea of cloud,
It is but for a time; I press God's lamp
Close to my breast: its splendor, soon or late,
Will pierce the gloom: I shall emerge one day."

Second: Believe in Yourself.

Believe in yourself as God's child, as vitally related to him, even as the leaves are related to the tree or the bay out yonder to the great ocean beyond. Believe that your life has not been flung meaningless to the void, but that God has sent you here for some high purpose. Say to yourself with Whitman:

"No longer do I seek good fortune—I myself am good fortune."

Believe that whatever happens to you happens because it bears you some message you need to hear. "Do not pray for easy lives! Pray to be stronger men! Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks! Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle. But you shall be a miracle. Every day you shall wonder at yourself, at the richness of life which has come in you by the grace of God."

Third: Replace Fear by Trust.

We all know what fear does—it paralyzes people both physically and mentally. A frightened army is an army half conquered. Fear

can upset almost all the functions of the body. No person in the grip of fear can have either physical health or mental poise and efficiency. What the great fears do the little fears do also in more subtle ways. We know the little fears under the name of worry. Worry impedes all the processes of digestion. It reduces the size of the capillary arteries and impedes the circulation of the blood and consequently the removal of waste tissue from the body. A prominent physician said to me: "When a man comes into my office complaining that his stomach is all upset and he can't digest his food, I make him sit down in that chair and I look him square in the eye and say: 'See here, you are worrying about something. The first thing to do is to stop that worry.' "

If we could replace fear and worry by a trustful attitude of mind we should remove a large part of the suffering in the world and prepare ourselves to meet with double courage and efficiency whatever might yet remain. But how? By the practical application of religion to life. Here is a method worth trying. I don't know altogether where it came from—it grew. But I know it will work. Every night as you go to sleep make it a practice to relax all your muscles and then quietly and peacefully repeat to yourself some such little formula as this: "I am God's child. He loves me. Underneath are the everlasting arms and round about me is his great love. As the day is even so shall my

strength be. There is nothing in all the world of which I need to be afraid. Because I am God's child these are the words that are going to govern my life; bravely, quietly, calmly, patiently, lovingly, trustfully and with perfect serenity and self-control."

Fourth: Replace Hatred by Love.

The physiological and mental effects of hatred are akin to those of fear. "Green-eyed jealousy" is not mere poetry—it represents the ultimate physiological effect of hatred and jealousy. Hatred will draw ugly lines on your face and on your soul. If we could eliminate from the world hatred, the holding of grudges, the spirit of revenge, how much of the world's burden of sorrow would be lifted! You can put away your share. "I have never willingly planted a thorn in any man's bosom," said Lincoln. Make that the standard of your attitude toward men and then go further and say, "Neither have I permitted any man to plant a thorn in my bosom."

Fifth: Work!

Work because you at least want to pull your own weight in the world, but, deeper than that, work because work is one of the world's greatest sacraments. Many a man borne down with his own sorrows or oppressed with the burdens of the world has turned with a kind of blind instinct to bury himself in his work. And as he worked dumbly in the darkness there came

gradually light and comfort and understanding. Why? Because work is sacramental and through it we enter into living fellowship with the Father who "worketh even until now!"

Sixth: Resolutely Cultivate Good Cheer.

Count it a deep disgrace to be grouchy and resolve to consume your own smoke and show a shining, happy face to the world.

> "A naked house, a naked moor,
> A shivering pool before the door;
> A garden bare of flowers and fruit
> And poplars at the garden foot;
> Such is the house that I live in
> Bleak without and bare within."

Your house of life may be no more attractive than that at first glance.

> "Yet shall your ragged moor receive
> The incomparable pomp of eve,
> And the cold glories of the dawn
> Behind your shivering trees be drawn;
> And when the wind from place to place
> Doth the unmoored cloud galleons chase,
> Your garden gloom and gleam again
> With leaping sun and glancing rain;
> Here shall the wizard moon ascend
> The heavens in the crimson end
> Of day's declining splendor; here
> The army of the stars appear!"

Good cheer is largely a matter of will-power, of conquering our moods, of resolutely treading down self-pity and cleaving ever to the sunnier

side of doubt. You doubtless remember Alice Freeman Palmer's experience with the little tenement children in the Boston vacation school. "Tell us," they cried—these children of the tenements—"tell us how to be happy!" And the answer was filled with wisdom: "See something beautiful every day; learn something beautiful every day; help somebody every day." Read the story and you will see that the prescription worked well in the Boston tenements. It will work in other places equally well!

Suppose one orders his life according to these spiritual ideals—what will happen? I cannot guarantee that pain and suffering will cease for you, nor that if you are exposed to smallpox or yellow fever or typhoid you may not have to battle with disease; nor that disaster may not come to your business; nor that death may not step within the circle of those who are near and dear to you. No one can guarantee these things. Those who pretend to do so simply delude themselves. But this can be guaranteed without equivocation: If any man will order his life according to these high spiritual principles he shall not be left a helpless victim before whatever trial may beat upon him. He shall have in these ideals, and in all they have contributed to his life as he has steadfastly held to them, a refuge, a source of strength in the hour of need, an equipment of weapons with which to fight a good fight in the day of battle.

After all, the test of life is old age. There are men who as they grow old grow hard, disillusioned, embittered, rebellious. The things to which they have given their energies have gone with youth and old age is empty and lonely. But to any man or woman who cherishes these spiritual ideals old age shall be not something to be dreaded, but something to be welcomed serenely. To grow old with these ideals is to mellow, to find life ever more interesting, to face death with

> " . . . in my heart
> Some late lark singing—
> The sundown splendid and serene."

Those on the Atlantic Coast who looked into the face of Edward Everett Hale and those on the Pacific Coast who loved John Knox McLean know how serene the faces and how beautiful the wisdom of old men may be.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHURCH

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THE CHURCH

JESUS said very little about the Church but a great deal about the Kingdom of God. He was more interested in establishing the rulership of God in the lives of men than in setting forth any husks of organization. He wrote no creed, established no ritual, ordained no bishops. He left his followers free to organize as might prove wise in each day and generation to hasten the coming of the Kingdom. The Church of each age must be judged by its efficiency in getting done in the world the things Jesus sought to accomplish.

But to understand the Church of today and to be delivered from taking certain ecclesiastical pretensions too seriously we need to know something of its history. The Christian Church began with the immediate followers of Jesus who considered themselves regular members of the Jewish Church, but believed that they were especially enlightened by their conviction that the Messiah had come. These first Christians had no intention of separating from Judaism—they were simply good Jews drawn together by common loyalty to Christ. They looked to his inner group of the twelve for leadership, and

they appointed seven other men to serve tables and to distribute alms to the poor of their number—who were by no means few. They gave generously to the common funds, some contributing all they possessed, though this was not compulsory.

But as Christianity overflowed Judaism into the Græco-Roman world and churches composed largely of Gentiles sprang up in the track of St. Paul and other missionaries the Church took on slightly more elaborate forms of organization. Local officers seem to have been the "*episkopos*" or "bishop," a Greek term meaning overseer and practically corresponding in secular organizations of that day to our term president, and the "*presbuteroi,*" or elders, whose offices were probably derived from the organization of the synagogue. Besides these there were deacons to look after the poor, and apostles, teachers, and prophets—many of them practically itinerant evangelists. The early churches seem to have been self-governing and were composed largely of slaves. It must be remembered that almost all school teachers and even physicians of the period were slaves. Slavery implied social misfortune, but not necessarily ignorance. The meetings of these early churches were held at night and at private houses—hence the Pauline salutation, "to the church in thy house"— and the services were exceedingly simple. They included a sort of basket lunch called the love-feast, Scripture

reading, prayer, singing of psalms and testimonies. Then the inquirers and all not definitely committed to Christianity were sent out (Latin, "*missa,*" whence our word "mass" for the Roman Catholic eucharist) and the group of Christian believers remaining ate the symbolic Lord's Supper together.

In 313 Christianity became a tolerated religion and in 325 Constantine proclaimed it the official religion of the Empire. From now on the simplicity of the earlier days was gone. Vast masses of people became Christians by wholesale—hardly more than baptized pagans. The Christian leaders also found themselves with the whole machinery of organized paganism turned over to them. At the same time Constantine transferred his capital to Constantinople and left the bishop of Rome as the most influential person in the West. Then grew up feudalism with its ideal of a dual organization of mankind—a Holy Roman Empire with the emperor at its head and a Holy Roman Church with the pope at its head. The Medieval Church was the result of these events and forces. The cup was denied the laity, the power and importance of the priesthood increased, the monastic orders grew apace, the saints took the places of the local gods and goddesses dear to the common people, Christmas and Easter were substituted for old pagan festivals, the bishop of Rome became *pontifex maximus* and it looked as if Christianity had conquered the Roman

Empire. We now realize that it was more nearly true that the Roman Empire had conquered Christianity!

Yet this great Medieval Catholic Church, half pagan as it was, had its own share of beauty and spiritual power. The great Gothic cathedrals still stand as witnesses of a religious life, the secret depths of which we imperfectly understand as out of the noise of the modern street we step beneath their great arches or gaze reverently down their dim and silent aisles. And St. Francis of Assisi, whose life had so little to do with cathedrals but who lived out of doors along the roadside with the birds and the flowers, the lepers and beggars, the Wolf of Gubbio and Brother Sun and Sister Water—this little poor man of Assisi, poet, philanthropist, mystic that he was—makes it impossible for us to count even the Middle Ages utterly "dark."

After the Middle Ages came the Renaissance —that great awakening of the human spirit in all departments of life. It expressed itself first in literature, architecture and art, and later in religion. Wyclif, Huss and Savonarola were silenced, but Luther at last set Europe aflame with a fire that could not be quenched. The Reformation was a protest against the veneer of Roman paganism and the dogmas of medieval scholasticism, and a rediscovery and renewal of loyalty to the simpler Christianity that had existed before the days of Constantine.

The Reformation was not uniform—indeed it shows two distinct types and many variations. One type was rather conservative. It parted with no more of medieval forms than was absolutely necessary. It is exemplified by the Lutheran and Episcopal Churches which, while vigorously Protestant in their theology, while turning the service from Latin into the common tongue and banishing celibacy and the confessional, yet retained the cross and vestments and titles, the frescoed saints and stained glass windows, the church year and the candles on the altar. The sterner and more radical type was led by Calvin—in its most extreme form by the Anabaptists—and refused to countenance anything that might bring back memories of Rome. The vestments were replaced by the ordinary scholar's gown of the educated gentleman, the frescoes were whitewashed, the stained glass windows broken, Christmas and Easter banished, bishops and priests expelled, and not only were the candles taken off the altars but the altars themselves were pulled away from the walls and transformed into communion tables, behind which stood the ministers, facing the people. The old whitewashed churches of Holland bear striking witness to the rigor of this type in the Reformation.

Now out of this Reformation movement come the various Protestant denominations of today. The Episcopalians and Lutherans descend historically from the more conservative wing of

the Reformation party. The Calvinistic wing expresses itself in the Reformed Church in Holland and the Presbyterian Church in Scotland and in the extreme Puritan party in England. Out of this last have come the Baptists, the English Congregationalists, and by way of Leyden, the "Mayflower" and Plymouth Rock, the American Congregationalists. From these primary denominations secondary ones have arisen—the Methodist as the result of a great movement for religious quickening in the Church of England led by the Wesleys, the Unitarian as a protest against the neo-Calvinistic theology of New England Congregationalists, the Disciples or Christians out of the Baptist and Presbyterian Churches of the Middle West, and finally the Christian Scientists out of——Boston!

Possibly it has been worth while wading through all this historical outline in order to realize why things are as they are today, to understand how utterly anachronistic is the survival of some of our denominational differences, and to be set free now to face the practical problems which confront not some little denomination but the great Church Universal. What to us are vestments or candles or stained glass windows or prayer-books or the question of observing Lent or Easter? In all these things we are perfectly willing to give every man—or church—utmost freedom to follow the way that may best minister to his spiritual life. Congre-

gationalists are keeping Lent and, out in Africa at least, Episcopalians admit non-conformists to communion. The Baptists have practically given up close communion and most Presbyterian Churches are equipped with organs! My own pulpit is on one side of the church instead of in the middle and I frequently use the prayer-book prayers in the service. These things are no longer of sufficient importance to divide the Church of Christ as it faces its really great task in the world!

What is the task of the modern Church? To serve the moral and spiritual needs of the world, to do the great thing that was ever nearest to the heart of Jesus—build here in the earth the Kingdom of Heaven. The Church should stand in the crowded ways of modern life as one that serves. It should be a great public servant in matters of morality and religion.

In order that we may really face our own day and get as far as possible from the terminology of the Middle Ages, let me suggest to you this parable: The Church is a great public service corporation. It is strikingly like a public service corporation in three ways: First of all, it supplies great common necessities which every man must have. The Church is a purveyor of the water of life. It seeks to bring light into the darkness of ignorance. It dispenses power to those whose moral machinery has stopped; it seeks to put men in communication with one

another as brothers and with God as loyal children. Its transportation service is tremendous in bringing men up to the level of high ideals, and its educational work is called for wherever children are being trained for life.

The Church and the public service corporation are also bound by one common and inexorable law: that, in the case of either, competition is almost criminally wasteful. Students of social problems now uniformly recognize that it is an economic waste to have two telephone companies, two electric light companies, two street car systems competing against one another. The public pays for the duplication of equipment and overhead expense. As one looks at the church life of a typical city how utterly foolish seem the location of the Protestant churches, the failure to establish any real parishes for which the churches shall be definitely responsible and the compelling of poor neighborhoods to be religiously starved while rich neighborhoods are religiously overfed.

Again, the Church and the public service corporation have this in common: their continued existence depends absolutely on the efficiency of the service they render. Wise public service corporations realize this and so seek publicity and maximum efficiency. They know that they can put off the day of government ownership only as they do the work in their field more cheaply and effectively than the government can. Since the advent of the parcel post the

express companies have seen a great light. The Church has a similar lesson to learn. It must win the respect and loyalty of men, not by living on its past reputation but by demonstrating its power to render service today and tomorrow. The world is not going to be interested in theories of apostolic succession. As Winston Churchill says: "The successors to the apostles are apostles." The church that meets the twentieth century as eagerly and hopefully as the apostles met the first century is in the real succession. The world cares very little that this Church came over in the "Mayflower"—it is more interested in what it can do for those that are now coming over in the "Vaterland," the "Olympic," the "Mongolia" and the "Chiyo Maru."

Here are four tests which modern life unconsciously but relentlessly requires of the Church today:

(1) *Is it sincerely seeking effective church unity?* How to unite the Christian forces of America and organize them for their common task is one of the supremely important issues of today. Denominations which think they have a monopoly of religion, so that no community is complete without them, must give way to a respect for the value and dignity of all Christian churches and must show a spirit of humility rather than arrogance. We must have an effective working unity of all Christians of whatever name before we can face the problems

of present-day city life—and the need in the country is, if possible, even more urgent.

How shall effective church unity come? First of all, not by absorption. We shall not all become Episcopalians or Baptists or even Congregationalists. That is the ideal of Christian unity denominations sometimes seem to hold—we are all to accept their standards. They take the attitude of the tiger in the jingle:

> "There was a young lady of Niger
> Who went for a ride on a tiger;
> They returned from the ride with the lady inside—
> And a smile on the face of the tiger!"

But church unity is not coming that way!

Then there are others who seem to think that church unity may be achieved by what might be called the method of the least common denominator. The Episcopalian shall give up his prayer book, the Baptist his immersion, the Methodist his presiding elder, and at last we shall get down to the elements common to all denominations.

But these denominational peculiarities are largely temperamental and have certain real values. Abolish them and they would begin to grow up again next week. In New Haven, where Congregationalism is overwhelmingly in the majority, the local Congregational churches differ among themselves very much as the different denominations do in Western cities.

If not by absorption and if not by the method

of the least common denominator, how then shall a working Christian unity be achieved? The answer of history seems tolerably clear—by federation. How was our American nation formed out of the group of jealous, highly self-conscious colonies along the Atlantic seaboard one hundred and fifty years ago? Not by absorption—Virginia did not swallow up Connecticut. Not by elimination of all points of difference—Massachusetts did not make many concessions to the slacker standards of New York or Delaware. An effective union came by federation in face of a common peril and to accomplish a common task. Each colony retained local self-government, retained its customs and prejudices, but each gradually learned to add to these things a new element of loyalty to the larger thing which became at last the nation. O for some great-hearted George Washington to summon our provincial religious denominations to rise out of their suicidal local jealousies to meet the great task of Christendom!

(2) *Is it reaching youth?* Here is this great stream of childhood with its never-dying splendor and its never-ending song still pouring in through the gates of birth. What is the Church doing to bring to every child in the world, as its life expands, the great seed-thoughts of Christian truth? How efficient are our Sunday schools and other means of Christian education? How efficient are they in our big strong churches? How efficient in our little struggling

churches? How efficient in the tenement districts of our cities, where the streets swarm with little children? It is more important to meet this test than to be absolutely sure you have been baptized in the only possibly correct fashion. A parish house where the ten commandments are taught on Sunday and where during the week this same moral code is put into operation in clean athletics, wholesome recreation and good-fellowship; a social-center building open every day and night, dedicated to character building and providing for the youth of the community a better *rendezvous* than the saloon; even a basketball court on a vacant lot supervised for the welfare of the young life of the neighborhood—such activities as these very properly go far to endear the Church to the generation in the midst of which it must do its work.

(3) *Is it delivering a social message?* We are living in an era of social reconstruction. The culmination of a great mechanical era is symbolized in the completion of the Panama Canal. The engineering of the future is going to be social engineering. Something like the same brains, energy and money that have been poured into the solving of physical problems are now to be turned toward our social problems. We are building something more beautiful than any slender Gothic spire that ever lifted itself against the sky—we are building a better civilization of brotherly men. The emer-

gence of the juvenile court, the Pittsburgh Survey, the Lloyd George budget, the modern drama, such a magazine as the "Survey," the growth of Socialism—all point to the awakened social conscience of our day.

For this day of social reconstruction the Church has a message. It is no new-fangled message hurriedly improvised for the occasion, but a message deeply rooted in the past, even as far back as the days when Moses argued with Pharaoh concerning hours of labor, wages and industrial conditions on the banks of the Nile; a message inevitable from the great teachings of Jesus concerning the sacredness of childhood, the dignity of womanhood, the supreme value of every human soul. Whatever else Jesus taught or did not teach, he certainly taught brotherhood, not as a beautiful sentiment but as a social responsibility. That every child should have a chance physically and spiritually to grow up into a well-rounded manhood or womanhood, that every man should have his just share of the product of his toil, that no woman should be forced into any form of slavery, that reform, not vengeance, should rule our prisons, that arbitration and justice rather than brute force and war should rule in international relations—these things constitute the social message of Christianity and they root deep into the very center of it. If the Church is adequately to serve the twentieth century, it must deliver this social message. It must deliver it from

its pulpit at the morning service as of equal dignity with the individual message it has stressed so long. And it must incarnate its message in practical service to the community by so building its edifices that they shall not stand cold, aloof and silent all the week, but so that every day and every night they shall stand open, radiant with light and vibrant with brotherhood and all appropriate forms of social service. It does this on the foreign field already—why not at home?

(4) *Can the Church transfigure the lives of men?* The world cannot be saved by any merely social regeneration, though that is part of the whole. The supreme task of the Church is not accomplished until it has brought the individual soul face to face with God. The world is glad Jesus was a carpenter, but at its deepest moments that fact merges into the greater fact that he was the Son of God. It is because through Jesus we come not merely to brotherhood but also to God that we cleave to him. The parable of the Good Samaritan does not stand alone—the tenderer story of the Prodigal Son must ever be bound in the same volume.

"Oft have I seen at some cathedral door
A laborer, pausing in the dust and heat,
Lay down his burden, and with reverent feet
Enter, and cross himself, and on the floor
Kneel to repeat his paternoster o'er;
Far off the noises of the world retreat;
The loud vociferations of the street
Become an undistinguishable roar.

"So, as I enter here from day to day,
And leave my burden at this minster gate,
Kneeling in prayer, and not ashamed to pray,
The tumult of the time disconsolate
To inarticulate murmurs dies away,
While the eternal ages watch and wait."

This is the last test—can the Church bring men into the very presence of God so that his strength may flow through their weakness and round their restlessness his rest?

The church that can meet these four tests shall endure and be loved and honored in the world, whatever name it bears and whatever liturgy it follows.

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